

# National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board

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## MEETING MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call

**Thursday, September 9, 2010, 12:00 (Noon) – 1:00 p.m. EST.**

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Dr. Martin Massengale (Chair); Dr. Walter Armbruster (Vice Chair); Dr. Robin Douthitt; Dr. Dennis Heldman; and Jean-Mari Peltier.

**Executive Committee Members Absent:** Dr. Nancy Cox; Marianne Smith-Edge; Dr. Edward Runge, and Dr. Mary Wagner.

**Invited:** Carol Keiser-Long and Dr. June Henton

**NAREEE Board Staff:** Rob Burk (Executive Director); and Shirley Morgan Jordan (Program Support Coordinator)



### I. Roll Call of Members and Invitees

- Rob Burk conducted a roll call of the Executive Committee and invited guests participating on the call.

### II. Comments and Welcome

- Dr. Martin Massengale welcomed the committee, and spoke regarding the delay in the appointment of the new Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics (REE) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

### III. Comments from the Acting Under-Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics (if available)

- Acting Under Secretary Dr. Ann Bartuska was unable to attend the Executive Committee conference call.

### IV. Updates on Committee Activities and/or Reports

- Specialty Crops Committee

- Dr. Walter Armbruster stated that he was working on a report which would combine the information gained from listening sessions in San Antonio, TX and Sacramento, CA.
  - Jean-Mari Peltier reported on an event that she recently attended in Pullman, WA. She noted that the discussion was in direct contrast to the discussions in San Antonio and Sacramento. The event was held by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Most of the attendees were grant recipients. She stated that the "logic model" was discussed in detail.
  - Jean-Mari Peltier noted that there had been a number of technical issues reported related to electronic grant application submission in the previous Specialty Crops Research Initiative request for applications.
- **Renewable Energy Committee**
    - Carol Keiser-Long reported that she attended a Water Conference on behalf of the committee. The event featured a section dedicated to bio-fuels. Carol shared the most recent report of the Renewable Energy Committee (REC), and she feels that the report from the conference will incorporate some of the points from that report.
    - Carol Keiser-Long updated the Executive Committee on her efforts to hold a joint meeting of the REC with the Department of Energy's Biofuel Research and Development Initiative Technical Advisory Committee. She noted that if she were unsuccessful the REC could have a later meeting in Washington, D.C.
      - Dr. Martin Massengale questioned whether there was any discussion related to algae at the conference. Carol Keiser-Long reported that there was "some" discussion on the topic.
      - Carol Keiser-Long noted that sorghum was discussed.
    - Carol Keiser-Long reported that she had not yet received any inquiries related to the most recent report of the REC.
    - Dr. Martin Massengale requested that Rob Burk speak with Dr. Ann Bartuska about the communication of REE responses to NAREEE reports.
    - Jean-Mari Peltier commended Carol Keiser-Long for her work with the REC, and that point was echoed by the Executive Committee.

## **V. Update on Work Groups**

- **Report on Sustainability in Support of Food Security Update**
  - Dr. Dennis Heldman reported that he was almost finished with the report and that there were a few minor corrections to be made.
- **Update from Work Groups**
  - Jean-Mari Peltier reported that the discussions of the group were headed in two directions. 1) Responding to a request for input made by Dr. Roger Beachy, and 2) the discussion regarding setting a program for the October meeting of NAREEE.
    - Jean-Mari Peltier stated that the Work Group is preparing a report on the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) 2010 Request for Applications (RFA). The report is due to NIFA by September 15, 2010. She stated that

the Work Group is taking a different approach on the RFA. A draft document is already in place and she will do a hard edit of comments and circulate to the Board members by Friday, September 10, 2010.

- Dr. Robin Douthitt questioned whether a response had been received from NIFA related to questions posed regarding the demographics of the grant review panels. She also questioned the status of the new NAREEE appointments.
- The Executive Committee reviewed the draft report and requested Rob Burk to distribute those edits to the Work Group.
- Jean-Mari Peltier discussed the program for the October meeting. She questioned the timing of the vote on the Chair and Vice-Chair of NAREEE.
- Dr. Martin Massengale discussed the agenda in more detail. He stated that it may be feasible to move the vote on the Chair and Vice-Chair of NAREEE to the morning of October 28<sup>th</sup>, however he said it should be included early in the meeting.
- Jean-Mari Peltier stated that her hope was that the Board could obtain a clear picture of the REE agency budgets and potential changes/shifts in the programs. This would allow NAREEE to advise on changes that could be made through the 2012 Farm Bill.
- Dr. Martin Massengale noted that Dr. John Goldberg would be participating in the Fall meeting on the morning of October 28<sup>th</sup>. However, he has not been able to schedule another congressional representative to date.
- Dr. Walter Armbruster stated that the Work Group needed to develop questions for the Agency Administrators. Jean-Mari suggested that the group focus on those after September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Martin thanked the Work Group their efforts on the draft of the NIFA AFRI RFA and in establishing a program for the October meeting of the Board.

## **VI FY 2010 Nominations Status**

- Rob Burk stated that he would be meeting with Ann Bartuska on Friday concerning the nominations.

***The next Executive Committee Conference Call will be cancelled in lieu of the October 27-29, 2010 meeting of the NAREEE Advisory Board unless special circumstances arrive requiring an Executive Committee Meeting.***

The meeting adjourned at 1:10p.m.

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Martin Massengale  
Chair

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Rob Burk  
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD:

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Date